Case study #2
Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique
CNRS Committee for Gender Equality and Research Excellence

Inspired from STRIDE Committee ("Strategies and Tactics for Recruiting to Improve Diversity and Excellence") originally created at the University of Michigan (US) through the NSF-ADVANCE Programme
Review procedures and practices for the evaluation, recruitment, promotion and rewarding of researchers at CNRS, examining potential sources of gender inequality such as unconscious social stereotypes.

Make proposals for improving gender equality in procedures and practices at CNRS.
**Membership**

*Decision-makers* in the researchers’ evaluation, recruitment, promotion and rewarding processes at CNRS

- CNRS Chief Research Officer
- Chairs of the different peer-review evaluation panels for researchers at CNRS (*sections and CID of the Comité National de la Recherche Scientifique*) and Secretariat General to the *Comité National*
- Deputy scientific directors from each of the 10 CNRS Divisions (*Instituts*)
- Human Resources senior representatives following researchers’ careers
- Senior CNRS women researchers in (previous) decision-making positions
- CNRS Gender experts
- Mission for the place of Women-INTEGRER team
MEETINGS

- Proposal for this Committee/Working Group first made at a national training day on CNRS recruitment procedures for all new Chairs of the Comité National panels, which included an awareness session on gender equality and stereotypes (December 2012)

- Support from the CNRS President, inviting panels Chairs and asking CNRS Divisions to nominate a Deputy scientific director as member, focusing first on the STEM fields

- Kick-off meeting in July 2013

- Request from the Comité National to include all fields (46 panels)

- Meetings 3 times a year since the kick-off meeting in July 2013
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Lowered success rate

Accumulation of disadvantage

Performance is underestimated

Gender Schemas

Evaluation bias

Solo status/Lack of critical mass

Courtesy of the STRIDE Committee at the University of Michigan, ADVANCE Program (US)
If We Do Not Actively Intervene, The Cycle Reproduces Itself

Lowered success rate

INSTITUTIONAL INERTIA

Gender Schemas  Evaluation bias  Solo status/Lack of critical mass

Performance is underestimated

Accumulation of disadvantage

Courtesy of the STRIDE Committee at the University of Michigan, ADVANCE Program (US)
STEP/1

Training on gender equality issues and unconscious bias, based on the latest social science literature, with researchers invited to present their findings

Peer-to-peer interaction between scientists

To tackle the lack of gender awareness and competence, and build capacity
Among Invited Experts

- **Catherine Marry** (sociology, CNRS)
  the glass ceiling effect in research and other sectors

- **Pascal Huguet & Isabelle Régner** (cognitive psychology, CNRS)
  stereotype threat and implicit associations

- **Lisbeth Söderqvist, John Tumpane** (Swedish Research Council)
  observation of grant evaluation panels

- **Claartje Vinkenburg** (organisational behaviour, VU Amsterdam)
  career paths of ERC grants applicants and laureates

- **Sandrine Julien** (statistician, CNRS)
  longitudinal study of researchers’ career paths at CNRS

- **Loukas Balafoutas** (experimental economy, University of Innsbruck)
  benefits of affirmative actions for lab efficiency

- **Arnaud Pierrel** (sociology, Univ. Poitiers, France)
  gender bias at entry competitions in *Ecole Normale Supérieure*
STEP/2

Prepare and distribute to Committee members & evaluation panels pluriannual sex-disaggregated statistical fact sheets with background on recruitments, promotions, rewards in their section in the past 10 years.
STEP/3

Ensure that all information is relayed and disseminated (indicator factsheets, reference publications, meeting minutes, etc.)
ACTIONS
Family-related career breaks (maternity / adoption / parental leave) informed in the applications forms (specific section added to concours online forms) and subsequently taken into consideration in the evaluations.
For CNRS Rewards (Bronze and Silver Medals), suggestion that each evaluation panel proposes both a woman and a man for each award – instead of only one name as was done before, thus ensuring a higher gender balance in the final selection step.
Invite external observers (senior gender researchers) during interviews of candidates in the CNRS entry competitions (concours), to help develop a reflective practice and detect any gender bias in the treatment of the candidates: 12 sections & CID volunteered in 2015
Impact & Outcomes:

- Increased awareness of the decision-makers in the Committee and multiplying effect via panels and CNRS Divisions
- Increased gender balance in scientific awards (CNRS Medals)
- Increased ratios of women recruitments/applications & promotions/applications
- Innovation in the CNRS organisational structure

Success!
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